

Testimony for Transportation Committee  
Submitted by James MacPherson for CDSP  
March 5, 2014

## Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee:

I thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Connecticut Driving School Professionals in favor of SB 334.

This bill would require that adults, who are now required to take an 8-hour course on the state's traffic laws and safe driving practices before they can go for the behind-the-wheel driving test, be required to take the course before they go for the written learner's permit test, which is now required before they practice driving with a qualified adult who oversees the training.

This requirement recognizes the substantial differences between the paths that teens take in their efforts to gain a license and that followed by adults. Mounting anecdotal evidence is suggesting that many adults, in an effort to comply with the current learner's permit law, take the test, fail it, perhaps more than once, and then decide to simply drive without a permit or license. Calling for these adult license applicants to complete a course that emphasizes the state's rules and regulation for safe driving before they take the permit test that will allow them to practice driving on the public streets would increase the likelihood of passing that test and enhance public safety.

Our organization is also in favor of the provision that would require adult applicants for their first license to declare that they have had at least 10 hours of practice before taking the behind-the-wheel test. This practice could be completed with a friend, relative, fellow worker or professional instructor. We are not suggesting that there be a mandate for professional instruction.

Not only is the CDSP in favor of adults drivers seeking their first license complete at least 10 hours of practice, more than 80 percent of the public taking part in a recent AAA survey thought this should be required. Ten hours of practice is minimal, but we know that many adults go for their driving tests with much less than that. The Department of Motor Vehicles recently issued a press release outlining some of the harrowing and life-threatening experiences DMV inspectors and agents have experienced while doing their job of administering the test to unqualified license applicants.

For these reasons and for the enhancement of public safety, we would urge adoptions of these two common-sense provisions.